



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Teton
National Park

PO Box 170
Moose, Wyoming 83012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 15, 2006 06:46

Joan Anzelmo/Jackie Skaggs
307.739.3415 / 307.739-3393

Grand Teton National Park News Release

Grizzly Bear Killed by Vehicle in Grand Teton National Park

A four-year-old male grizzly bear was hit and killed by a vehicle about midnight on Friday, August 11, in Grand Teton National Park. A driver and two occupants, traveling southbound from Moran Junction on Highway 26/89/191 at 55 mph, hit the bear approximately one-half mile north of Cunningham Cabin turnout. The grizzly survived the initial impact, but died a few minutes later along the side of the road.

The three occupants of the 1998 Chevy Cavalier were not injured; however, the force of the impact threw the bear onto the hood of the car, causing extensive damage to the windshield and full air bag deployment. The vehicle was disabled and had to be towed away.

The male grizzly, bear #494, was captured and radio collared in Grand Teton National Park during a research project in July 2005. The bear dropped its collar about one year later in June of 2006 near Moran Bay on Jackson Lake. Data collected during the 11 months that the bear wore its collar indicated that it roamed from Ditch Creek to Flagg Ranch and into the Teton Wilderness. However, the bear remained largely within the park, spending time around Signal Mountain, Willow Flats, Berry Creek drainage, and along the shores of Jackson Lake. This bear had no history of interactions with people or habitual use around park developments.

This is the second grizzly bear killed by vehicle on park roads in the past two years. A yearling male grizzly was killed near this same location on June 11, 2005 while following his mother and a sibling cub as they crossed the highway. Approximately two to three black bears are also involved in vehicle accidents each year in the park.

These encounters between vehicles and park bears – among other wildlife incidents – serve as a reminder that wildlife are actively crossing and using park roads. Motorists are advised to be especially alert for wildlife and to drive with extra caution.

Motorists are reminded to drive the posted speed limit and to be prepared to stop suddenly for wildlife along or on park roadways. Driving slower than indicated speed limits – especially at night – can increase the margin of safety for people and wildlife. Collisions between motor vehicles and wildlife may result in severe damage to a vehicle, serious or fatal injuries to the occupants of that vehicle, and/or death for the animal involved.

In addition to bears, elk may travel on and alongside park roadways. They often move in large groups during low light conditions and are usually most active between dawn and dusk. Moose, bison, deer, pronghorn antelope, coyotes, and other animals may also be encountered on or near all roads in Grand Teton. Many of these animals have been killed in collisions with vehicles.

-NPS-
www.nps.gov/grte